



LBJ Country

Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park and
Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site

New Faces, Initiatives for 2003 Full of Promise

Lamar Smith is now the Congressional representative for Blanco County, where the park headquarters and Visitor Center are located. Congressman Smith sent *LBJ Country* the following greeting upon assuming his expanded responsibilities.

It is with pleasure that I welcome the entire Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park to the 21st Congressional District of Texas, and with gratitude that I acknowledge the warm welcome given me by my new constituents in Blanco County.

As a result of last year's redrawing of Congressional district boundaries, Blanco County and the Johnson City District of the LBJ National Historical Park were added to the 21st Congressional District. Since 1987, I have represented the rest of the Hill Country, including the LBJ Ranch District of the national park and LBJ State Park and Historic Site in eastern Gillespie County.

The National Park Service has been a special interest of mine since my first term in Congress. The first bill I sponsored and passed expanded Big Bend National Park in far West Texas which, at that time, was part of the 21st District. The pen President Reagan used to sign that legislation was framed and hangs on my office wall in Washington, D.C.

The Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park is an important resource that preserves not only the history of one of our most energetic presidents and helps explain the turbulent times in which he served, but also lays out the story of the Texas Hill Country and the people whose lives and characters are rooted in that rocky soil, as was President Johnson's.



Regardless of the season, the beauty of the Hill Country is on display at the parks along with the history the facilities offer to visitors. Despite many visits over the years to the LBJ parks, I learn something new with each trip. And it is gratifying to see the interest shown by other visitors in LBJ and the fascinating history and beauty of the Hill Country he cherished. Incidentally, at my last visit to the Visitor Center, I bought two biographies of President Johnson that I had not previously read.

The legacy of Lyndon B. Johnson is evident throughout the area I now serve, much of which was in the 10th Congressional District that Johnson represented from 1937 until his election to the Senate in 1948. It is important to all of us—and to the next generation of our nation's leaders—that this history be preserved as is being done so well by the dedicated staff and volunteers at the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park and Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site.

Speaking of history in the making, the LBJ parks have begun working more closely with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). Headquartered in Nashville, the AASLH provides leadership and support for more than 5,000 members and also represents their interests on a national level. Both individuals and institutions belong to AASLH. All strive to make the past more meaningful in American society. Among the many member programs sponsored by the organization are professional development workshops and seminars, an annual convention, and an extensive publications program. AASLH also convenes national taskforces and assists target audiences that have not previously benefited from such a service provider.

In September 2002, the AASLH directorate invited several administrators of presidential properties to convene a taskforce for the purpose of developing a special program area for presidential sites and libraries. This group (including national historical park superintendent Leslie Starr Hart) will draft a charter and a statement of purpose and recommend topics for presentation at the 2003 annual meeting. One proposed session is an educational venture, "Presidential Texas," a statewide travel experience that already has 14 interested parties on board. Together these sites tell the stories of six presidents, a vice president, and one presidential advisor, all of whom had significant connections with Texas.

Joining forces with the AASLH will add an important voice to the parks' ongoing discussion of the demands and the rewards of public service - in the past and the present, and for the future.

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Upcoming Events

Aliens on Our Land—February 25

Learn more about your neighbors--invasive plants and insects from afar.
7 p.m. National Historical Park Visitor Center, Johnson City.

From Caterpillars to Butterflies—March 25

See caterpillars in a new light and increase your appreciation with the aid of a Texas Parks and Wildlife entomologist.
7 p.m. Park Visitor Center, Johnson City

Frogs and Songs of the Night—April 22

Frogs and toads are featured with a field trip to their aquatic habitat in Blanco State Park.
7 p.m. Blanco Community Learning Center, Blanco

LBJ Ranch Roundup--April 26

Round up the family for a Texas-sized day of fun at the LBJ Ranch Show Barn. Hereford cattle, cowboys, horn branding, roping, chuckwagon, live Western music, a "kid corral" and more.
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (First bus leaves LBJ State Park and Historic Site at 9:30 a.m.) \$3.00 per person, 12 and under, free.

Venomous Snakes of Texas—May 27

Snakes can be beautiful if we take the time to understand them. Live specimens will be present.
7 p.m. Blanco Community Learning Center, Blanco

Anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps Observed by State, National Parks

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a New Deal agency that came to the aid of young people during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The anniversary celebration encompasses eight states—New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Texas. It gets underway the weekend of March 29- 30 at Hyde State Park in Santa Fe. Texas Parks and Wildlife's tribute on Monday, March 31 at Bastrop State Park east of Austin will include U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service (NPS) participants. On that date in 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt established the CCC to employ youth in service to America.

All told, there were once more than three million "CCC boys." They built the infrastructure in many national parks, including roads, as well as lodges and museums. Their talents were also put to good use in crafting furniture. Bandelier National Park in New Mexico has the largest collection of CCC furniture in the National Park Service, the largest cache of tinware and the biggest CCC historic district, made up of 31 structures. Known as the "Tree Army" for their reforestation work, the young men also fought fires as the need arose.

Thirty- two state parks in Texas have a CCC connection. An ongoing Texas Parks and Wildlife oral history project interviews ex- CCC employees in the parks where they worked to videotape their precious memories on location.

Lyndon Johnson was deeply involved in both the CCC and the National Youth Administration (NYA)—a similar 1930s youth assistance agency. While serving as secretary to Congressman Richard Kleberg, Johnson put Texas in the CCC forefront by ensuring that Kleberg's district had more CCC camps than any other district in the U.S. LBJ later served as the Texas state director of the NYA, beginning in July 1935. In Texas, the NYA became famous for the roadside park/rest stops it constructed, and LBJ won praise as one of the most successful state directors. The legacy of the CCC and the NYA continues to this day in organizations such as the Youth Conservation Corps, Americorps, and the Student Conservation Association, who continue to serve in America's parks.



Indian Lodge, located in the Davis Mountains of West Texas, exemplifies the devotion to craftsmanship that defined CCC construction. The Lodge opened in 1939 and still welcomes travelers.

Chilean Park Personnel Share Knowledge At LBJ Parks

Superintendent Iban Bolivar Bravo and Operations Chief Felix Forno had never been to the United States before arriving at Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park last December. These two park professionals from Chile were here in Texas to observe specific park operations in interpretation and education and the overall management of park historical and cultural resources. Their 16- day tour of duty in Texas also included eight days at Amistad National Recreation Area in Del Rio.

The trip was arranged by the National Park Service's Office of International Affairs. In January 2000, a bilateral agreement was signed between the National Park Service (NPS) and Chile's National Forest Corporation (CONAF), the government agency that manages the Chilean national park system. The agreement inaugurated a five- year program of technical exchange and cooperation in park protection and management. Currently 200- 300 international park employees from around the globe arrive to share expertise and innovative techniques with their counterparts in America's parks.

The two men represented two very different parks, Tolhuaca and La Campana. Tolhuaca is very remote with access nearly impossible.



Supervisory Park Ranger Sanchez (right) with Chilean Park Superintendent Bravo in the National Historical Park Visitor Center.



Araucaria trees grace Tolhuaca National Park.

One of Chile's smallest parks, it exists in part to protect a vital river corridor. The low visitation creates an opportunity to study threatened wildlife like the puma and special flora such as the araucaria tree, the national tree of Chile. La Campana is quite close to two large Chilean cities and experiences heavy visitor use. Some of its neighbors utilize park resources, collecting geological specimens for sale and cutting trees for their livelihood. This is of great concern because the park is home to threatened species. All in all 18- 20% of Chile's land is preserved for national parks, reserves, monuments, or natural sanctuaries; of these, 97 units are equivalent in nature to our national parks.

While here at LBJ, our guests were accompanied by Supervisory Park Ranger F. Gus Sanchez, who provided translation services and ensured that the visit was a most productive one. They were particularly interested in the "traveling trunks" used in educational outreach. They enjoyed field trips to the Cowboy Artists Museum and the National Museum of the Pacific War. A special treat was the opportunity to observe the national historical park's holiday event, "A Timeless Christmas in Johnson City".

The Johnson City Visitor and Tourism Bureau Welcomes You

As visitors discover while traveling through the beautiful Hill Country of central Texas, we have it all: mild temperatures, blue, cloudless skies, and creeks and rivers bursting with catfish. Buffalo, deer, and cattle (including the mighty longhorn) grace our countryside, and best of all, we have the friendliest people in the world!

Johnson City proudly hosts Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, Pedernales Falls State Park, and many other appealing attractions. In 2002, we had the following events that proved to be very successful for our community - hundreds of visitors enjoyed them:

- ³ Blanco County Fair and Rodeo (3rd weekend in August)—Food booths, exciting rodeo events (including the crowning of the rodeo queen), art exhibits, and cooking contests.
- ³ Pig Roast (October)—An annual event sponsored by a motorcycle club to raise money for the Cherokee Children's Home.
- ³ Lights Spectacular (November/December)—In its 13th year of delighting visitors from all over Texas and surrounding states. More than 100,000 lights cover the historic courthouse and hundreds of thousands more at Pedernales Electric Cooperative and other local business and residences. Many merchants and restaurants stay open late.
- ³ National Park Service—Three park events are held in Johnson City—Patriot Day (September 11), Hill Country Heritage Day (October), and A Timeless Christmas (December).

We are very excited to offer these plus other fun events for 2003, including our first "Wildflower Weekend" (April 12- 13). We invite you to come and stay with us, savor our excellent Hill Country cuisine, and experience our true Texas hospitality!

—Denisa Odiorne, Manager,
Johnson City Visitor and Tourism Bureau



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U.S. Department of the Interior
Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park
 P.O. Box 329
 Johnson City, TX 78636



Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site
 P.O. Box 238
 Stonewall, TX 78671

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™



Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park researches, preserves, and interprets the life and heritage of our 36th president, and in association with the adjacent Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site, provides a variety of opportunities to experience the local and regional context that shaped the last frontier president, informed his policies and programs, and defined his legacy.

Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park
 P.O. Box 329
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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so all may experience our heritage.

New LBJ Biography In The Works

Lyndon Johnson is still a man of mystery. And the greatest mystery is his early years. So contends Randall B. Woods, distinguished professor of history at the University of Arkansas. Professor Woods has been researching a one volume biography of Lyndon Johnson for the past seven years. He has paid two visits to the park's library in Johnson City to round out his research (and 31 to the LBJ Library and Museum in Austin). Under contract to Simon and Schuster, he has begun an anticipated 18- month writing process as this newsletter goes to press.

Dr. Woods feels that "the Great Society was one of the greatest reform movements in American history and that Lyndon Johnson had, for better or worse, an all- consuming social conscience coupled with his maniacal energy." What has been underdeveloped biographically to date is LBJ's individuality. Hence the need for a new approach. Of particular interest to Woods were the park's oral history tapes. He can envision 200 or more future dissertations on Lyndon Johnson, a major historical figure who is "only now being treated to in- depth scholarship" by himself and other writers. He has promised to send his graduate students to the park for their own research needs.

Woods is the author of a biography on J. William Fulbright, published in 1995. He has taught courses about the United States and Vietnam and US diplomatic history and black history. To his credit is a biography of John Lewis Waller, the African- American journalist. Originally from Taylor, Texas, the professor earned his doctorate in history at the University of Texas at Austin and has been on the faculty of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville for 32 years. He is fascinated by biography because he feels it has a more literary dimension to it than other historical writing, making it more likely to approach art rather than simply social science.

While not wishing to give away too many details, Woods anticipates his to be a favorable biography of our 36th president. We will have our reading glasses polished and ready!